SPECTRUM

A Note From The SPECTRUM Staff:

This second volume of SPECTRUM contains the prose, poetry, musings, and artwork of Villa Julie students, faculty and staff.

Some works fell prey to editorial license.

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Volume II

SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CAROL SAPORA
BROOKE PEIRCE
SUZANNE LESLEY
and our
ADVERTISERS

VILLA JULIE COLLEGE
Stevenson, Maryland

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The Shoulds

Claudia Should stood at the kitchen sink and finished the breakfast dishes. She was a tall and handsome woman and very capable--why, not only did she keep a beautiful home, she maintained the lawn, flower beds, and did a variety of outside chores that are usually reserved for husbands. She easily managed PTA committee work and the Ladies Church Circle activities. Claudia believed she could say no to people, but she never did. She acted as if she had self-worth, but she never believed it. She sighed heavily. Her husband, Stewart, had left for work some time ago, and her son, Evan, age thirteen, had just made the mad dash to catch his school bus.

Claudia pondered last night's fight with Evan. He was having a hard time with math. She thought he should try harder and told him so. He had heard it before.

"I'm trying as hard as I can, Mom," he cried. "I'm stuck. I need someone to help me with math, not lecture me on will-power."

"Evan, I know you can do the work. You should just..."

"Listen, Mom," his voice growing louder. "I spoke with my advisor. She said not to be so hard on myself--that with a tutor..."

It was Claudia's turn to interrupt. "Evan, you really should talk to your Dad before..." And so it went.

The night had turned ugly. It was not just the math. Claudia sensed other issues stirring within Evan. She felt them too. Their moods often ran parallel, and she was experiencing her own brand of discontent. She tried to shake the scene from her memory. I should get going, she thought. There's a lot to do today. I should cut grass and weed around the roses. I'm so tired. I really should get some exercise. Maybe I could lose those five pounds I should have lost after Christmas.

Claudia's day went well. She had done all she set out to do and then some. When Evan came home, however, the mood soured. The silent treatment. A little dinner, a little conversation, but nothing was resolved. Claudia, Stewart and Evan said their proper goodnights and the very loud silence continued into the dark as all the Shoulds went to bed and tried to quiet themselves.

That night Claudia had a dream. In the dream, she woke to find that the grass had grown a foot overnight. Why, this is ridiculous, she thought! I should get those blades sharpened...And she angrily attacked the huge task before her. With much huffing and puffing and many shoulds, Claudia mowed, barely able to see the machine in front of her. Suddenly, she fell, and with no ground beneath her, she went on and

on, tumbling down to who knows where! Claudia landed as suddenly as she had fallen and with amazingly little fright looked around. She found herself in a community of sorts, quite pretty, actually, and not far ahead she could see what she thought was someone watering a garden. She approached the figure. It was a letter! An upper case letter F, with skinny arms and legs and a stupid hose in its hand!

"Oh, hello Claudia," he called. "We've been waiting for you." Claudia was dumbfounded. A capital F? The questions were racing through her brain so quickly they could not find their way out.

"Let me help you out," he said, sensing her utter confusion. "This is the Land of the Type. Type, yes, as in typing--right off the keyboard. You know, upper case, lower case, exclamation point, even space bar. We like to think of ourselves as 'the right type!'" He laughed. "We knew you were coming. This place is so suited to you." Claudia just stared. He continued, "My dear, all your life you've been living by the 'shoulds.' You can stop now--there are no shoulds here--no choices, no faith. Why, the character next door is going to tell you how to live! That's right; P, I think his name is. Nice type. He will tell you exactly what you should do so that you are accepted here--how you should dress, what to have for dinner, what's politically correct, etc., etc."

Claudia shuddered. "Look," he said. "It is so simple. You have allowed others to set your standards and goals, to dictate your behavior, and create your self-image for too long. Now you can live! Of course, you must tell the neighbor on your other side what to do, but it's fun--empowering! Why, my wife..."

Claudia found her voice. "This is the stupidest dream I have ever had!"

"Oh no," he laughed. "No dream. This is what you've worked so hard for. We were sure you would love it here."

Claudia sneered. "And what if I wake up and decide not to do what the character next door tells me?"

"Why, Claudia," F seemed shocked. "You're deleted, of course."

She screamed. And she screamed again so loudly it woke her up.

It was only five a.m., but Claudia got up and started the coffee. Even came downstairs at 5:30. "I couldn't sleep," he said. "Maybe I should..."

She stopped him. "We can make friends with who we are, you know. Way down, inside--where we are alive and vulnerable and loving. We can accept that and maybe find peace."

"I know, mother," he said.

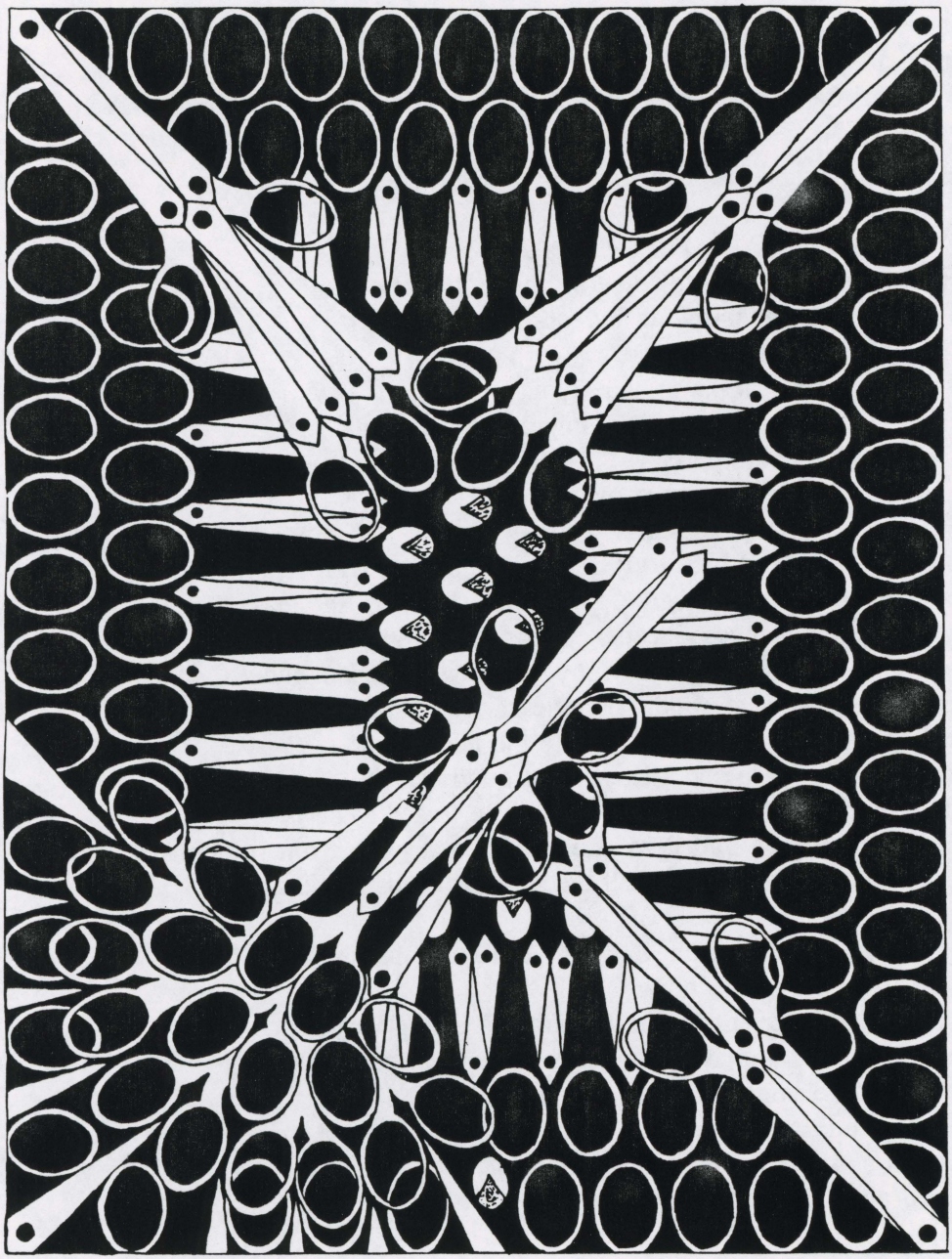
Pamela N. Heffner

Unsimple

Indecision draws me and the four winds of change wrench
to quarter this mind.

For sanity's sake
I rested in the grass and tried to solve my heart's puzzle.
But the winds were eager biting at my ears through a scarf.
Grass didn't help--I went to swingsets.
Heaving falling surging dropping hair flying
but got nowhere. My stomach still swung after I stopped.
I hung in the canvas seat aimless.
I looked, no, saw, my eyes slipped over
a miniature snail on bright red leaf.
Minutes before, I'd kicked high to graze a close branch with straining toe,
figured--humor the heart for a while. I reached down for the leaf.
Snail didn't mind the change of scenery, kept on inching
across the tiny leaf-world. It touched my finger with curious mouth,
and nibbled. No good. No good, sorry heart.
Snail turned up its nose and trailed back to the leaf.
I put it back down in place and kicked the ground nearby.
All that didn't help with the child's simple smile I used to carry
in my pocket-cheeks now limited by cheekbones that grew from someplace.
(For what it's worth, my toes are still the same.) I must've learned
to hoard my giggles.
Swingsets used to bring them on, but now it takes more. Now. Oh yes--
now.
Now I'm sitting by the telephone in the kitchen feeling very much
a grown-up. My mind is playing ring aroundaroundaroundaround
the rosy. The phone rings.
My heart swings up and swung
sinks, my heart sinks, a wrong number...all fall
down. And drawn. And quartered.

Kristen C. Boggs



You Make the Choice

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Why I Hate Airports

About six months ago, my dad had to go on a business trip. My mother, in her infinite wisdom, decided that my brother, my sister and I would accompany her and my dad to the airport so that we might all say goodbye together. In theory I have no problem with this. My only gripe was that his flight left BWI at seven in the morning. Well, that and the fact that my mother doesn't like to be without my dad for extended periods of time. Bad things always seem to happen when Dad goes away. This proved to be no exception.

At 4:30 in the morning we were all dragged out of bed. We left for the airport at about five to make it in plenty of time to see Dad off. Everything ran pretty smoothly, at least, as smoothly as things can go at that time of day; I was impressed. Then boarding began. That was when Mother began to lose all control. She was upset and depressed because Dad wasn't going to be around. I can understand this sentiment. Really I can. My boyfriend is going home for Christmas for three weeks, and I am going to miss him. But home to him is Texas, and as I said, it's three weeks. Dad's business trip was a four-day tax conference in Nashville, Tennessee! She really needed to settle down.

Mother finally stopped sobbing long enough to let Dad get on the plane. A wave of relief washed over me. I thought, "Whew! Okay. Time to go home and go back to bed!" Wrong. We sat and stared at the immobile plane for a while; then it started to taxi. We followed it down one side of BWI, all the way to the end, watched the plane round the end of the building, and then followed it all the way back down the other side of BWI, until--thank God--the stupid thing took off. It was gone! We were really ready to go! It was 7:45, but we were leaving!

Mother reached into her purse for the keys. She dug around for a second, then pulled out her wallet and handed it to me. Then her glasses case, her lipstick, mascara, a blue pen, a broken pencil, used Kleenex, an envelope; you get the picture. Notice that I did not once mention the words "car keys?" They were at home on the kitchen table. I was mad--furious! I couldn't believe I was stuck in an airport on a dreary Saturday morning when I should have been in bed, asleep. My mother is a very intelligent woman. She managed to raise three wonderful (?) children and still maintain a 4.0 in college. Did she not realize that the only way we were going to get home was to drive there? How in the world she managed to forget the keys is completely beyond me.

All was not lost. My grandparents have a set of our keys. If we could convince them to waste a Saturday morning driving to and from an airport messengering a set of keys, I was home free. We called them. No one was home, but that's why God invented answering machines. I was sent to the gift shop with a list of magazines to buy. We needed something to do while waiting for my grandparents to arrive. We called two more times and left two more messages. By now it was 9:30. I was fed up. I was going to go home even if it meant I had to walk there. It suddenly dawned on Mother that her brother lived all of three blocks from my grandparents' house. He could rescue me! When we called him, he informed us that my grandparents were in Virginia and wouldn't be back until late Sunday night. It's a good thing we didn't wait around for them to bring the keys. We would have waited a long, long time. Around eleven, Uncle Michael showed up, keys in hand and smirk on face. No one in my family will ever let Mother forget this, especially Dad. He had taken an extra set of keys with him, "just in case."

Betsy Delozier

A Love Game

♥♥♥

What do I know, anyway? I'd known Phos for four years, going on five, and it never occurred to me. Not for one second. We were always such good friends! And to think--yeah, well. It was just a rumor. I suppose it shouldn't really matter as long as it didn't affect me. But thinking about it, there was that whole episode that week at St. Elmo's Cafe...and he didn't say anything to me!

Let's see. Levin, Ignis and I went over there Tuesday night after class (Ignis has that late class on Tuesdays, so we went at about nine-thirty.), just to see if anyone was there--you know. Have a cup of joe, bullshit for a while and watch all the artists walk in with that air of: "You have never known true pain like we have, bourgeois scum." It's kind of a joke, really, going to the cafe sometimes. But it's not like there's anything worthwhile to do besides homework. I mean, most of the professors aren't too tight about that sort of thing--and we're so burnt out already. Anyway, Levin and I picked up Ignis (she was late, as usual) and the three of us got to St. Elmo's before anybody else had started showing up. There wasn't the normal wait for a table; we got one right away and sat down for a while, just drinking some coffee with a shot of 'lume, talking. Now, I hadn't even heard all that stuff about Phos yet. I guess Levin thought I already knew, what with me and Phos being close like we were. And I doubt Ignis would've said anything anyway. It'd taken her three months to block him out. At least they could be around each other again, barely. But I was completely oblivious. I don't have any classes with anybody from the group this semester. And gossip's just not my thing. No thanks. Except when it comes to Phos, in which case the story is always a <u>good</u> one. Nobody knows trouble like Phos.

So there we were, kicking back, feeling kind of glim but not noticeably so. We had a nice buzz. Then, after a good hour or two, who should show up but Beta Lampyrine, who I swear hadn't been to Elmo's in over a year. He came right over to our table, all excited and looking a bit blink. Little too heavy on the 'lume would be my guess. Anyway, he came right up and started talking to Levin about something or other, really fast and hush-hush, right--Ignis and I were totally in the dark. After a few minutes he and Levin were laughing hard. Levin kept looking over at me like I should know what he was talking to Beta about, but like I said, I didn't know. And Levin might've just thought I was being a bitch about it, darkfacing the whole thing. What do I know?

So eventually, Beta said cheerie-oh and took off. Levin didn't say another word about it, but asked Ignis about this new guy she's seeing--some guy with high frequency she says, a real photoelectric. Ignis was her usual tight-lipped self. Levin and I both knew that after a little more 'lume she wouldn't stop talking about this guy and his great wavelength. How crass. That sort of thing never interested me. I mean, who really cares as long as somebody's kind and respectful and doesn't boast about how many betties he spangled last week? I guess it never bothered me when Phos did it because I've known him so long, and I knew a lot of it was just a front. He wasn't quite so shallow as he made himself out to be. And when we were together with Levin, who's pretty much a straight-up gentleman, he could be a decent guy. Of course, Ignis would disagree. It's too bad. We all warned her not to get serious about him. He was just too unstable. Likely to blink out anytime...probably why the rumor got started.

Shortly after Beta left, the three of us got to talking again. Levin's got this lightless professor teaching one of his classes, and you can't help making fun of the old darklings. You know--"what's the matter baby, somebody trim the wick?" Yeah, it's childish, but still kind of fun. A good release after the stuff we deal with in school. It's all in fun. Once the light goes out there's not much you can do about it. Not so funny, but you've got to make fun of something even if it's gloaming. We're all afraid of gloaming. It's a part of life. No glow, no spangle. Who likes to think about it seriously? Well, Ignis was going off on this poor professor and the wife's predicament.

"What if she gets the gleam?" Ignis asked. Levin was just laughing. "No more spark to kindle a flame, no more flint left in his steel. Maybe it's time she bought some batteries, whatdya say?"

It was pretty stupid, and I didn't say anything (but I sure thought of some good remarks). We all laughed anyway because we were tired, and who really cares? It was about this time that Phos walked in the door. I remember because Ignis all of a sudden stopped laughing and looked down at the table with a slight scowl. She's still mad at him. When's she going to learn? Hopefully this new guy she's with isn't quite the bastard he sounds like. From what she's said, he sounds ten times worse than Phos. At least Phos wasn't an all-out Glimspangler. He was at least lambent most of the time, not so much a show-off. You know, you couldn't help noticing him, but he didn't exactly make himself noticed? Yeah. So I looked over toward the door to wave him over. And he's with her. Fata Morgana. No wonder Ignis was so annoyed.

A word about Fata. Fata was this kind of girl who lived rumor. She was rumor. Everything that touched her had stories going around about it. She was one of those girls who just glistened all over. She imbued light indiscriminately, a flicker here,

a flicker there; it didn't matter if the guy was a total stranger, she'd shine him on. I mean on. All the guys around looked at her and shuddered. From what I heard, she glimmed hard-core. Never a time when this chick didn't have a vial of pure 'lume on her somewhere. And she'd spangle with any old guy who had the length or frequency to suit her. Kind of pathetic in my opinion. I pitied her. Of course, you could never find out who the real Fata was. She was so absorbed in her own little incandescent sphere, who's to say if the rumors were true or not? There were so many (and so many detailed) stories of whowhatwhenwherehow and how much effulgence. I couldn't help but believe some of them.

At least I can say I keep my abdomen fully opaque. And I don't keep company with any of those avant garde exposurists. The notion of expressing when you're ready in public disgusts me. I mean, they go around wearing sheer clothing, sheer, and everybody can see when they're on the blink. No doubt about it. It seems so repulsive to me--a violation! I mean, if I find someone I really care about and feel safe enough expressing my attraction, I admit, I might show some blush around the navel, enough so he'd notice but wouldn't take it to mean anything more than that. Those exposurists, though... The men, too! The men actually fully flash in public!!! I don't know. It's so grotesquely inappropriate. Anyway, what was I saying? Oh yeah. Fata Morgana was one of those girls who was borderline respectable, teetering on the edge of decency. She'd been known to give off a sparkle or two without considering the consequences. I heard that she'd spoken to one of the Deans at CLU, who almost cited her for indecent coruscation. You think she'd learn to keep her gleamings to herself.

Okay. So in walked Phos with Fata. Now, I knew Phos. And I knew this was probably just another one of his gags--get us to think that he and Fata were together. But Fata was high-class. She'd never give Phos the time of night, even with his reputation for recreation. So I smiled at them and waved for them to come over, right? Well, Levin was gaping at this 'lume-goddess coming straight for us, and Ignis downed the last swallow of her coffee. Phos made his way over with a strange look on his face, probably glimming. Before he reached us, Ignis stood up and grabbed her stuff.

"I'm getting out of here," she muttered. I looked at her and nodded. She looked Phos in the eye as he approached the table, not smiling, just darkface, and slipped out behind a table next to us before he could say a word. He frowned for a minute as he watched her go, then walked up to Levin and me.

"Why hello, Mr. Levin Aureole," he beamed. Levin nearly choked, nervous in front of legendary Fata, but recovered himself and returned the greeting cordially.

"Why hello, Mr. Phos Borealis!"

"Ms. Aurora Gegenschein," he said, and I inclined my head with a smile at them both, feeling suddenly very cold. They sat down with us. The conversation was nebulous. Nobody said much of anything. Levin and I didn't quite know how to include Fata Morgana in any of our normal conversation, which tended to hack on people just like her. And Phos was being a bit too bright for all three of us, overly shiny, overly cheerful. It was obvious he was trying to impress Fata (How'd he get her here anyway, I wondered.). And the sad thing was, it was working. Phos had this way with girls. He was this bright, brassy, bigger-than-life guy with something to say about everything and a way to make it sound magnificent. After a few years, you kind of got used to it, but when you met him it was almost overwhelming. He just swept the younger girls away. We all made fun of him, but it was endearing. You know how it is. Unfortunately, Levin and I weren't impressed. We brushed him off like we always did, instead of building him up for the present company. I could tell he was getting tired of the act. He kept giving me these looks.

I mean, I was doing pretty well. My first instinct would be to tell this Fata chick to light her tail elsewhere and go find herself a good photoelectric with a big wavelength to occupy her evening, but I held my tongue. In fact, I actually condescended to make small talk with the glim bitch. We'd been buzzing on 'lume coffee for a while now and I was being none too cautious with my "polite conversation," but it was conversation. All Levin could do was stare at her semi-opaque dress and laugh too hard at my wisecracks. No help. Yeah, but Levin's a guy. It's to be expected. So I asked tit-for-tat little questions. Fata answered them, smart enough to know that she was unwelcome, and smart enough to know that, despite that, she was still desired company. Oh, it pissed me off. I started saying things.

"So, I hear you were at Friar's Lantern last weekend. There was supposed to be a great show. Some of my friends went, but they took off after a while because the crowd was so rank and obscene. I guess some of those exposurists showed up, and after that you just had to get out of the place. Not much of an evening unless you like that sort of thing. Not for me, though. Just a little too vulgar for me."

"Yeah, I was there," Fata replied, "but it wasn't anything I haven't seen before. I left when it got too dull."

"It's all up to taste, I suppose," I returned, smiling sweetly.

Phos gave me one of his sheepish, pleading looks. He really didn't want me to ruin the evening. So I shut up. It was Phos. I figured I'd humor him. Why not? Who could resist such incredible charm? Soon we started ignoring Fata while Phos told some of his tall tales. We just couldn't relate to her. She wasn't from the same world.

Which is why I never thought Phos would do what he did.

Later on, I had to be getting home because I had school Wednesday, and I didn't feel like sitting around the boys and their irrepressible gleams. So I swigged my coffee and left. I didn't see any of them for the next few days because mid-terms were coming up, and I had to do some hard-core cramming. No time for St. Elmo's. I took the phone off the hook so I wouldn't have to deal with the temptation. I was in the dark for a bit. No big deal. You've got to get away from things sometimes to get school back on track. You know how it is. So I left the cafe. Good thing, too, because Fata was getting a bit black at me and Phos was biting his nails every time I opened my mouth. Let Phos have the girl. Who cares, right? I didn't think anything would come of it.

...Boy was I hoodwinked. And to think! Oh, the shame of it. I plugged my telephone back in Saturday afternoon, what with midterms over. And Levin called me up. You know what he said? He said, "Phos better have a damn good reason for it 'cause I think he's gonna get in some serious trouble."

"Uhh...Hello???! What are you talking about Levin? What's going on?"

"What do you mean what's going on? You know about Phos, right?"

"Know what about Phos?" I didn't know anything, like I said.

"Phos has gone and engaged Fata. I mean the whole thing. Not just a spangle, Aurora, but mating. Mating! No joke. I can't believe you haven't heard any of this! Where have you been the past week?"

"What do you mean, where have I been? I had midterms, just like you. Now let me get this straight. Phos and Fata? Come off it. This is a joke. It's gotta be one of Phos's gags. You know he's not that stupid. Who'd you hear this from?"

"Beta told me," Levin said.

"Yeah, well, you and I both know how reliable Beta's word is."

"I'm not kidding," he said.

"Yeah, well. That's Phos for you. I still don't believe it."

"That's not all," Levin said. "She's in Question."

"No," I said. This was all starting to sound a bit frightening if it were true.

"Yeah. You heard about the Dean? Well, she wasn't just called in for indecent coruscation that one time. Her history's being investigated. Not only is she being linked with the exposurists, she might even be one of the Others."

"How scary...and have you talked to Phos yet?"

"No, see, that's the thing--I haven't been able to get a hold of him. I was hoping you had."

All of a sudden I was cursing myself for being so stupid as to leave my phone off the hook. I still didn't believe all this stuff yet. Come on. Phos was smarter than to get hooked with some Unknown, right? I mean, I could believe it if he actually got far enough to spangle with her, but that's not commitment, and with an Unknown... well. The idea of it was too shocking. I had to know for sure. I kept thinking: Phos! You're such an idiot when it comes to girls!

All right. So I picked up the phone and called Phos. No answer. Spooky.

Next try, no answer. Then I called Ignis.

"Hello?" It was her.

"Hi, Ignis? It's me. What's going on?"

"God, Aurora, I hope it's not true. Beta said he talked to Phos on Saturday and things were definite. Mating, can you believe it? I mean, I've been saying I hope he gets what he deserves, but not this. None of the Folk deserve Fata. Did you hear she's in Question? She's being investigated!"

"Yeah, I heard. Say, listen. I've been trying to call Phos. You know where he might be?"

"I don't know. I really don't. Levin said he thought you might know..."

"No," I said. "This is all news to me."

I hung up before she could ask me anything else. I had to find Phos. This was serious trouble. Next thing I knew, the telephone rang. It was him.

"Phos!! Phos, what the hell is going on?? Levin says you're Mated!"

"Yeah, Aurora, I need your help..." It wasn't a joke. "Something happened. I don't know what it was... I mean, me and Fata were at my place, and things were good, right, I mean--you know. Well, something happened. We were both really glim and everything. Aurora, I don't remember what I did! All I know was we were flashing--don't say it, I know, I know--and all I know was there was something strange about her frequency, something, I don't know, but it was wrong and I kept blinking anyway. And you know, I'm not some Glimspangler, I can control the blink most of the time, Aurora. You know how it is with me, though; I just get carried away sometimes like what happened with Ignis. My god, Aurora. My god. I think I've Mated an Other..."

I couldn't say a word. Phos a-a crossbreeder...

My mind went black. And suddenly the line was dead...

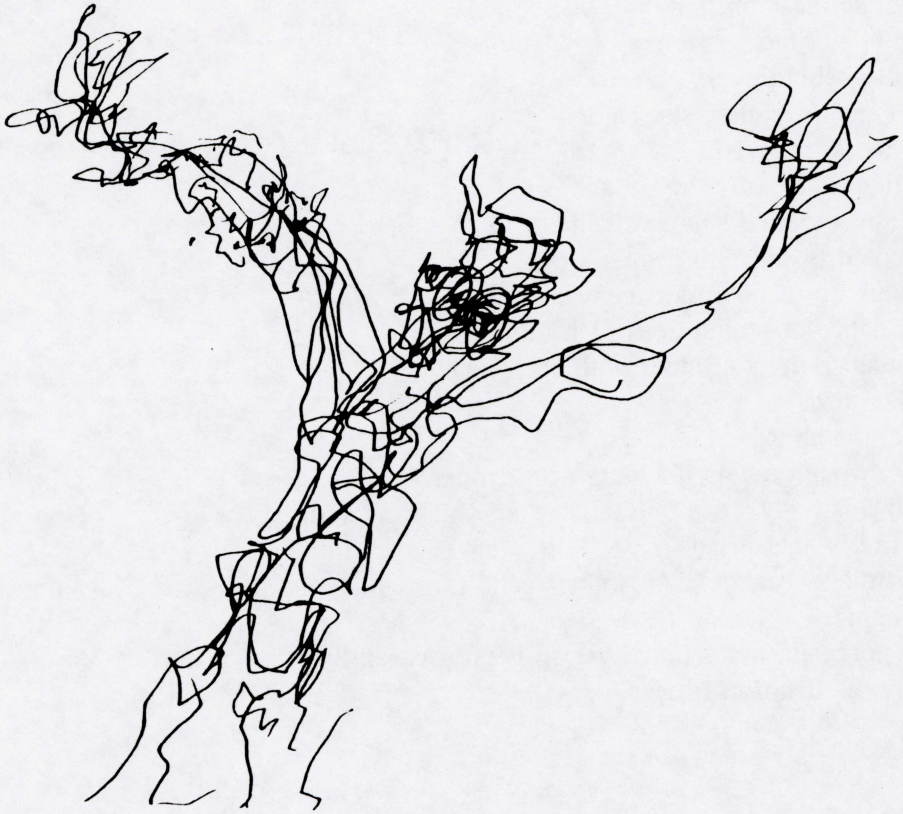
I guess you can never predict when this sort of thing will happen. I mean, I never thought it would happen to anyone I knew. And Phos! My friend for almost five years and now...well. What do I know? I guess he was a prime risk. They never go

for the stupid Glimspanglers. They like them of a better strain than that. And Phos was a decent guy. Ideal. Because They knew he'd fall for it, and that he wasn't that stable. They can't always count on a Glimspangler to take the final step and Mate. But Phos! I was really upset. And Ignis, for all her pretending, felt so guilty. I think she still blames herself for not knowing, for not doing something about it. We all feel pretty bad. Levin won't be the same towards women now. I don't know quite how to feel.

I do feel a bit of justice. You see, they caught Fata in the act. It wasn't hard to convict her of crossbreeding, and they executed her for Phos's death. There was no way she could get out of it when they caught her halfway through with his body. Still, thinking about it makes me physically sick. Phos. So hard to believe it happened to him. After the whole controversy about Fata Morgana and the false files she used to get into Coleoptera Lightning-Folk University, the laws have gotten tighter. It makes me feel a bit better. You know, they're even talking about making some sort of law against cyalume. 'Lume???...I don't know about that one. The cafes wouldn't be the same around here. But hey, at least Phos would've died for a reason. Things won't be the same without him, anyway. No. It'll take a while to get used to the idea of all this.

Yeah, well, I'm supposed to meet Ignis and Levin at St. Elmo's in a few minutes. We've really got to try and make bright without Phos. It'll be hard, but a cup of joe and some bullshit always makes me feel better. What do I know? What do any of us know? I'll be at Elmo's.

Kristen C. Boggs



♪♪♪

Betrayed

Thy trusting steed of iron will,
My heart with fury she did fill.
But as young men succumb to greed,
So I betrayed my faithful steed.

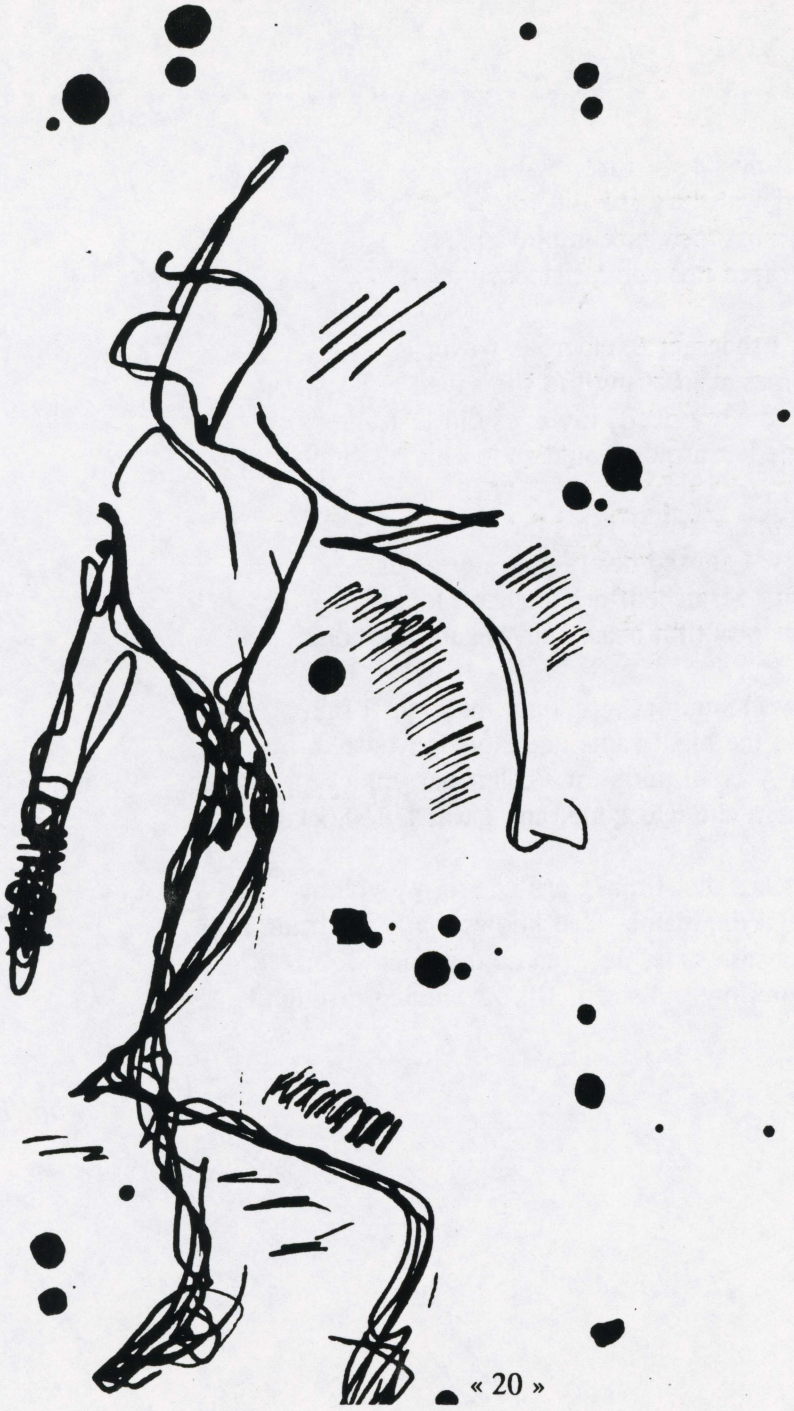
Proudly I rode her thunderous wave;
Three times at least my life she saved.
Though true my heart, my eyes did lust,
Each time her armor would spot with rust.

A chink in the armor scars the soul;
Merciless, I abused her to gain my goals.
Her paint I scratched, her leather I tore,
This once beautiful beast held beauty no more.

In the sweet summer air, 'bout midnight I say,
A thief in the night came and stole her away.
The fault was all mine for I'd left her unlocked,
In the morn she was gone, and I was left shocked.

The mistakes that I made are due to my youth;
I accept all the blame--God knows that's the truth.
Who ever now rides her, please treat her well;
For without my old steed, I'll be walking through hell.

Howard Franklin Slusher



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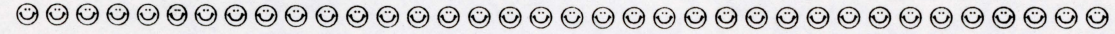
Images of Growth



I contemplate the truths of my heart in silence
Solemn aloneness lingers in the still of my room
Peaceful glimmers of hope dance in my visions of growth
A child peers through the window from inside of a glass house
A woman awaits her embrace from the other side
A reflection mirrors the sunlight and flowers
filling the woman's path
The child's heart elates observing the invitation
Both sides stand in quiet anticipation
The path is open and the vision is clear in all that it promises
The child slowly opens her hands so her palms face the shield of
glass which separates them
In moments the illusion dissipates and
I awaken to a conscious reality

Tina Martino

It's A Joke

♀♀♀

for the goose, why not give some to the gander? Misogyny may work its way back into polite conversation.

Speaking of negative feelings, I've noticed a lot of overreaction to the author's plan. So many people are victims of their own preconceived misconceptions; they only know what their mothers told them. These gainsayers must have taken the author's thesis entirely too seriously. It's a joke. He humorously illustrated the folly of trying to solve another problem by throwing money at it. In order to reduce future misunderstandings, perhaps Professor Perrin should more appropriately preface his precepts. Next time he could pick a less pregnant topic like mandatory sterilization. He might at least consider leaving comedy to the professionals and reproduction to "Xerox."

WORK CITED

Perrin, Noel. "A Nonbearing Account." The Research Paper Handbook. Eds. Ellen Strenski and Madge Manfred. New York: Longman Press, 1992.

John W. Barnickel, Jr.

Always for Always

♂♀♂♀♂♀

A Few Steps Back in Time

For nearly three years, I have been working in a hair salon in order to put myself through college--answering the phone, ordering retail products, shampooing, applying color, and, most importantly, meeting the people who would better help me to understand life, the clients.

Last year, the owner of the shop, Gisela, was faced with a crisis in her family. Her husband was diagnosed with a brain tumor, and his chances for survival were slim. He had been married to Gisela for only one year and was, at the young age of forty-three, healthy and vivacious; so naturally everyone felt a deep sadness over this tragedy. Going day to day not knowing if it were going to be the last for her husband, everyone throughout the shop felt Gisela's pain and suffering. The clients' support and caring was unbelievable. The way each and every one of her customers, as well as all of her employees and coworkers, pulled together in a time of crisis made the owner feel less alone and less bewildered. Her clients would stay with her at the hospital, make dinner for her and her two sons, and give her the support and reassurance that she needed in a time of such uncertainty.

As time passed, the support and caring remained as strong as ever. It has been a year since the diagnosis, and Gisela's husband is doing well. After chemotherapy and radiation, the tumor has stopped growing. He is working and enjoying life to the fullest. Gisela has never forgotten the love and support she received from everyone during that trying time.

Although her husband is doing well now, Gisela remembers the initial pain and hopelessness that she felt. As a result, she has decided to help and support other people who find themselves in her situation, in an attempt to try to give something back to those who helped her through such a difficult time.

Six months ago, our hair salon began catering to a different clientele. Gisela decided to fit chemotherapy patients for wigs. One of the most difficult parts of chemotherapy for patients to deal with is the side effect of hair loss. Watching one's own hair fall out can at times be as devastating to someone undergoing chemotherapy as any of the other side effects or even the disease itself. Making cancer patients feel good about themselves helps them a great deal toward their goal of beating the disease. Gisela realizes this and can relate in a personal way to each customer who comes in for

this new service. She feels that this is a way in which she can give back some of the caring and support that she received in her time of suffering.

Two weeks ago a client came into the shop to speak to Gisela. At the time, I was sitting in the reception area where clients first come into the shop. I asked the client if I could help her. She told me that she had an appointment, so I went into the back of the shop to let Gisela know that her next client was waiting. Gisela explained to me that the client was here to be fitted for a wig, and that it would be a few minutes before she was ready for her. As the words "fitted for a wig" came out of Gisela's mouth, I felt my stomach sink. This client was young. How could she have cancer? I couldn't imagine. What type of cancer? How old is she? Is she married?

I sat behind the reception desk continuing to write our "standings," the names of clients who have appointments at a set time each week, in the appointment book as I was doing before the client arrived. A few minutes passed before any words were exchanged between us, but then the silence broke.

"How long has Gisela been fitting people for wigs?" she asked.

I could sense her uneasiness. I explained when and why Gisela had started taking "hair prosthesis" on as a service. I could sense that the client was now beginning to feel a little more at ease. She let her guard and reserve slowly down. Before I knew it, she was telling me about herself. She explained that she had been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and that the doctors said she had less than a 50% chance of survival. I couldn't believe that this woman could so casually talk about how close she might be to dying. She continued to explain that her husband was emotionally devastated. She said she was acting as <u>his</u> emotional support. How strong this woman is, I thought.

The conversation continued. I learned that she had a twelve-year-old daughter whom she, of course, didn't want to leave. She was fighting for life in the hope of seeing her daughter grow up and of spending those years with her during which a mother is so important. Her will to survive came through her daughter. I felt I had never seen such courage and strength.

"I am ready for my next client," said Gisela from the back. I walked the client around back and told her to keep fighting. She gave me a hug and went off with Gisela. I thought to myself that this woman would make it because of her determination to be with her daughter, that she would survive because of her strength.

Just at the moment that I thought this, the words "Mom, you are going to be fine" rang in my ears. All these bottled-up emotions came flooding back to me. I was thirteen years old when I said those words to my mother...

Every day when I came home from school, I immediately ran up the stairs to see

my mom. It was the best part of the day. This was the time when I could tell her everything that happened in school. When I walked into her room, she would be sitting up in bed, all pretty in a nice nightgown, waiting for me to get home. I would always ask her how she felt that day, hoping to hear her say "great." Although she would only go so far as to say "fine," it still made me feel better to ask her. I would sit there and tell her each little detail of what I did in school that day--the test that I took in math, what I ate for lunch, who said what about whom, and, most importantly, the boy who sat next to me at lunch. I could see in her eyes how much she enjoyed being a part of my day through my detailed descriptions, that she wanted to know everything I told her and much more.

One day I ran up the stairs after school to see my mom, just as usual. I opened the door expecting to see her sitting up waiting for me, but there was no one there. Beads of sweat popped out on my forehead, my heart started beating faster, and I began to breathe heavily as I ran downstairs to my grandfather to ask him where Mom was. He told me that she was at the hospital for her chemotherapy treatment. My heart stopped beating so fast, and I calmed down a little. I sat outside waiting for Mom and Dad to pull up in the car.

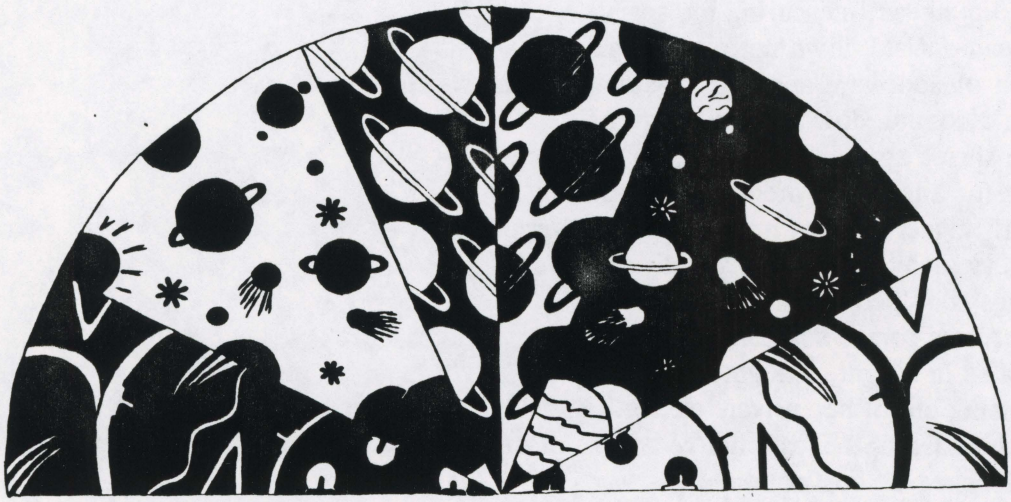
When the car pulled up, I ran over to it to help Mom get out. I couldn't believe how weak and sick she looked. My dad actually had to carry her up the stairs to bed. I felt alone and sad. I knew that chemotherapy would make her sick and weak, but seeing it face-to-face took me by surprise.

My mom had been fighting cancer for ten years and I knew that she was tired of fighting. She chose to take the chemotherapy treatments because of my sister and me. She was fighting for life so that she could spend more time with us. Many times my mom would tell me how tired she was, how she just wanted to give up and die, but that she didn't because my sister and I kept her going. Because she knew that we needed her, she continued to fight for her own life.

Although my mother died three months after I said those words, I know that she never gave up. She fought until the very end with every bit of strength she could find in herself. And all because she wanted to be with her children, to be with me.

I am thankful my mom had my sister and me around and wanted to be with us for as long as possible, since this gave her a little more time to live. The times we shared in her room together will live in my heart forever. In just the same way, Gisela's client is lucky to have her daughter. But her daughter is even luckier to have a mother willing to fight for life because of her.

Adriana Healy



It's not falling hard yet,
but it hits the ground all around
hushing other noise. Whisht!
Leaves laugh and pavement glistens.
People coming out-of-doors hunch up with muttered curses
and squint ahead, measuring the sprint,
then head ducked down not really looking
jerk out of doorways and bolt headlong into the weather.
Now it's coming down cat-and-dogwise.
People shrink against buildings
to wait for a let-up or the nerve to dash out.
Whisht! Water drowns noises between overhangs,
and every alcove is its own sound studio.
Awnings echo people in.
Ah, but here comes someone in an umbrella world.
She walks in a tight, straight line, little steps,
not passing out of her private circle.
She is huddled up beneath her red dome of dryness,
eyes clenched on destination.
Here comes a man in one too. His is black.
At the last moment they glance up from each other's feet
where they were looking. No time to smile,
they're right on by now. Even if they spoke--whisht!
The sound would wash away.
Lovers always use one umbrella.
And so do little girls who still hold hands
in worlds with pink candystripe peaks,
believing umbrellas on a level with swingsets and wildflowers,
even though they're soon abandoned for
barefoot puddlepadding. At some point people
forget how to have fun getting wet.
Walks in the rain are a mark of Weirdness.

Then there's the coming-in from out-of-doors.
A sight.
Sudden rush of warm yellow air and lights never on
during this time of day and
slick floors and
open umbrellas lolling about to dry and
noise of shaking out clothes or more muttered curses
at hair, at books, at ink running, noises and
faces all turned at you right as you're in 'cause
you've let in the whisht! of rain outside.
A heave as you drip and let out your shoulders,
a bit out of breath from the sprint, eyes bright with cold!
Sometimes there are
muddied towels underfoot that twist into sopping slip-hazards.
Funny they are always there days afterward,
damp, then slowly, slowly, more days until
they crust--sculptures half-cloth-half-dirt.
Whisht!
Somebody's opened the door.
It's the same everywhere.

Kristen C. Boggs

The Troll

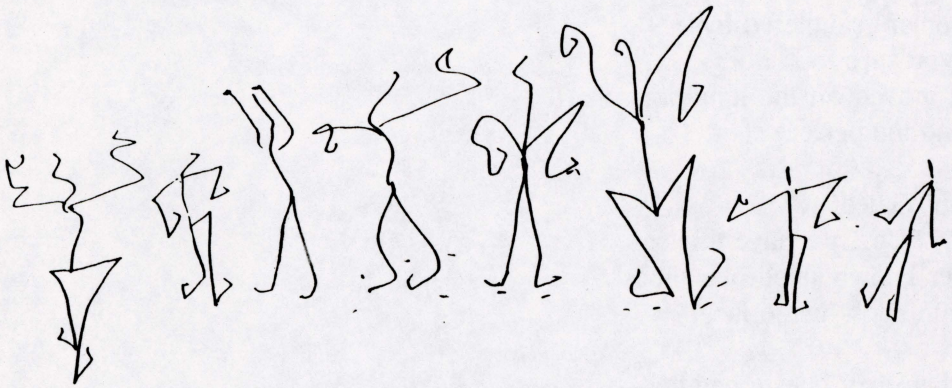
Through all the pain--I've lived
Seeing never-ending dreams die,
Trying to soar high with broken wings---
My life is a cruel riddle,
A horrible lullaby rocking me to hell.

Illusions are my life...they will tarry...
Blackening my colorful thoughts.
Talk to me you crazy woman!
Do you feel the trolls eating away your
Thoughts?

This demon crawls through my veins---oozing through
Every pore.
Can you not see him laughing beneath these tears?
He turns me inside-out.

Take me away from this.
Bring me to another land where life is not turmoil
But simplicity...
Where colors glow for me to see and oranges, sweet and ripe!
But reality...he rapes me from my bliss to watch me
Bleed---
To make me he!

Daniele Young



Ode On Steel-Toed Shoes

She walked into the barroom,
And ordered up her booze.
Anyone could plainly see,
She had on steel-toed shoes.

She wadded up her dollar bills,
And threw them at 'the man.'
She rested on the long brass rail
And there she took her stand.

A 'gentleman' sauntered by--
"Bitch, you sure look hot."
Her foot moved off the long brass rail
And found the perfect spot.

'The man' dialed 911
And said, "Uh...we have this case...
I've never known steel-toed shoes
To go with snow-white lace."

Later, when they questioned her,
She said, "Ah, it was fun!"
"After all," she smiled her smile,
"I could've had a gun."

The years have fled,
Her gait is gone.
But, no matter where she goes
Her feet are clad in her old shoes--
The ones with those steel-toes.

The Belle of Harford Road

The Villa Julie
Alumni Association
welcomes
The Class of 1993

Get involved. Villa Julie is you!

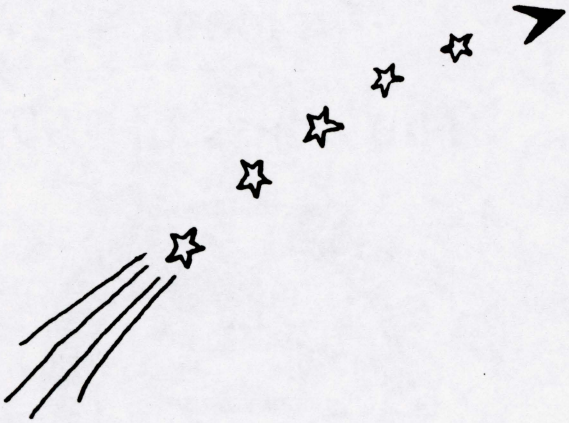
IT'S NOT NECESSARY

TO BE A STAR...

YOU'LL JUST FEEL LIKE ONE!!!

JOIN AN ACTIVITY...

AND CHART YOUR COURSE!!!



Congratulations, SPECTRUM!

Villa Julie College Student Activities

From Dead Poets to Pugwash:

The Journey is the end.
It's been great!
Good Luck to all!

Carol Sapora

ONE ≈ LINERS!!!!!

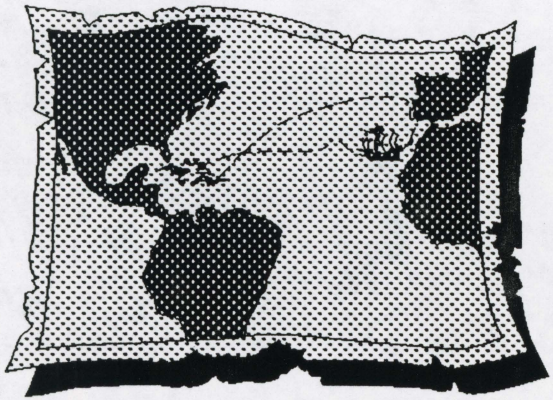
♣ ♣

C. U. L8ER!

♥ ♥

Allison Thompson, M.D.

♦ ♦



Forsan et haec olim meminisse juvibit.
-Virgil, The Aeneid

The Englis Faculty

Kathy Brown
Christine Flax
Diane Jacobs
Marilyn Julius
Carol Maccini
Alma Nugent`
Brooke Pierce
Harriet Ponton
Chip Rouse
Esther Rosenstock
Carol Sapora
Nanette Tamer
Christine Tomback
Jo Ellen Turner
Jerry Van Aken
Jenny White

Best Wishes

To our

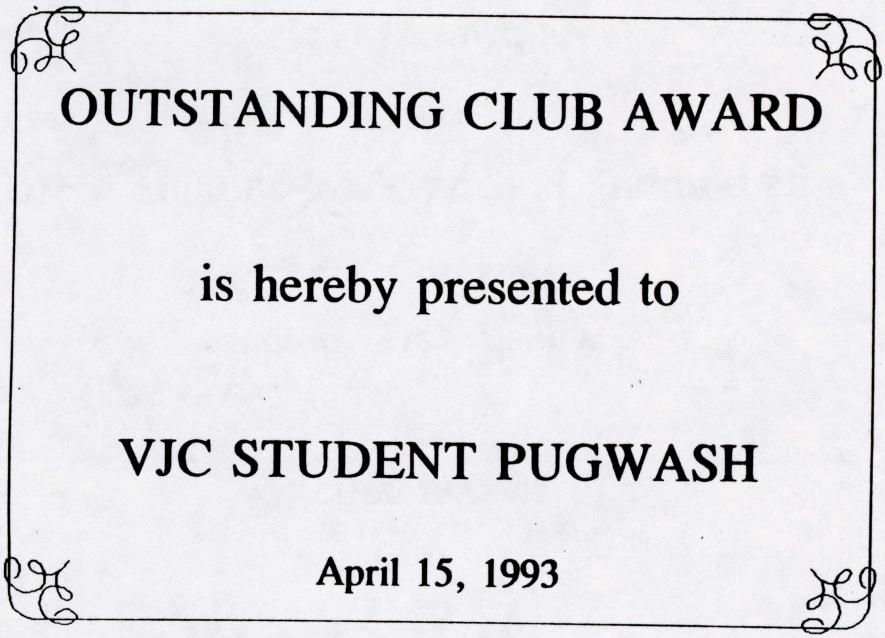
Enterprising Group of

Student Writers

and Artists

Carolyn and Rose

So Jean--how's it going so far?
Pretty well. I'm just putting the rest of these ads in and then we're ready to print.
Great! Hey, Kristen! How are you?
Smurfy.
Is that good or bad?
You decide.
So Jean, did Pug buy an ad?
Yup. See?



That looks great! Wanna donut Kristen?
No thanks.
Jean?
No--hey, watch the crumbs, Rachel!
Sorry.
So Jean, do we like, have to pay for all this advertising?

Villa Julie College

is proud to salute

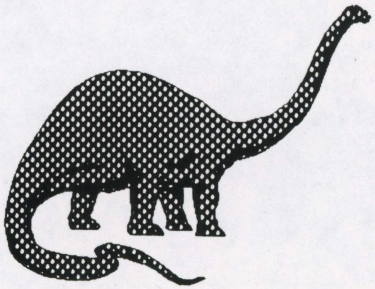
its budding Pulitzer Prize-winning writers

whose work appears

in this issue of

THE *SPECTRUM*

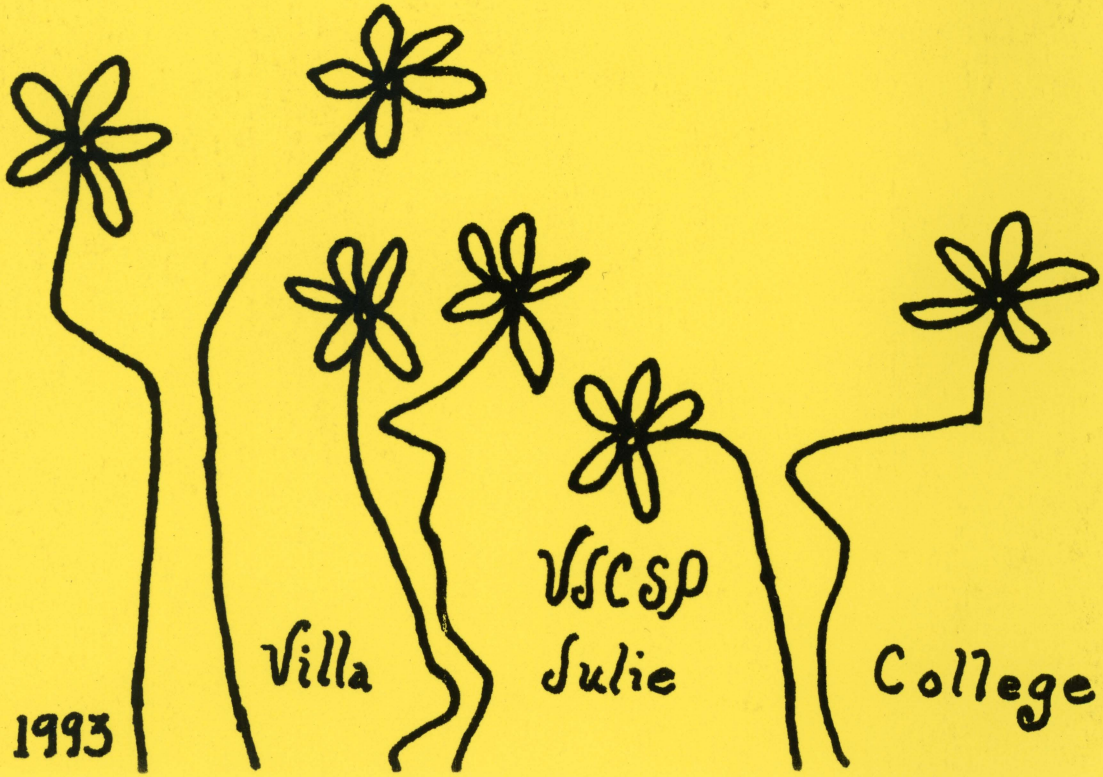
GET A LIFE!



The VJC Biology Faculty

ARTEMIS *LIVES*

You too can be a Goddess, if you are free, undomesticated, and belong to no man.


VSCSP
Villa Julie College
1993